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BOOK REVIEWS

France and the Alliances: the Struggle for the Balance of Power. By ANDRE TARDIEU. (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1908. Pp. x, 314.)

This is the story of the political regeneration of France. It is the story of the struggle between France and Germany, from the fall of the Second Empire to the conference of Algeciras. It is also a brief but keen survey of the diplomatic history of Europe during that period.

The Franco-Prussian War practically reduced France to the position of a second-class power. The republican government, which emerged from the national ruin, was not expected, even by its friends, to last for two generations. It was supported by Bismarck because he did not believe it capable of strengthening the country internally or of forming foreign alliances. In the very nature of things it would be regarded with distrust and aversion by monarchical Europe.

Thirty-eight years wrought a great change. In spite of the constant opposition of her powerful and hostile neighbor, and the diplomatic blunders of her statesmen, France has won her way to a foremost place among the European powers.

She has demonstrated the enduring quality of the Third Republic and the essential reliability of her people. She has a firm alliance with Russia, and through her understandings with England, Italy and Spain, the support of those countries.

The primary cause of this diplomatic success is to be found in the industry and thrift of her people.

The Franco-Russian alliance was good diplomacy for both countries. But the fact that in 1888 France was able, and began to float, for her future ally, the loans that have since assumed enormous proportions was principally responsible for the signing of the treaty of alliance in 1891. Nor would Italy so soon have forgotten Tunisia, if French gold had not averted a serious financial crisis for that country.

The Russian alliance made France secure in her defence against Germany and the Triple Alliance. The understandings with England,

Italy and Spain enabled her even to assume an aggressive attitude and to proceed with confidence in the development of her colonial empire.

It is with the formation of the alliance, the gradual development of the French understandings and the final triumph of the diplomacy of the Third Republic that the book deals.

M. Tardieu sees two powers, Germany and France, occupying the center of the European stage during the last two generations, Germany, suddenly grown abnormally powerful, striving to hold and extend her power and to keep France weak and isolated, France crippled by her rival endeavoring to win the confidence and support of Europe.

He says in his preface, "To show them France of today, in presence of Europe and the world, such as she has been shaped, after painful experiences, by thirty-eight years of sustained effort and diplomatic action, is the aim that I have proposed to myself." Further on he says, "A Frenchman could not treat such a subject otherwise than from a French point of view. But to try to understand one's adversaries is already to do them justice. With this spirit of justice I have endeavored to inspire myself, yet not seeking to hide errors, which indeed do not fundamentally affect the whole of the French achievement."

In reading the book one is impressed with the feeling that he has admirably succeeded in his endeavor. He is remarkably just and fair in his views, especially with reference to German statesmen. Indeed his most severe criticisms are leveled at the follies and political mistakes of his countrymen.

M. Tardieu has not attempted to make out a case for France, but to recognize facts and to draw the necessary conclusions. Thus in the Hartman case, the rightness or wrongness of France, in refusing to extradite him, would not have affected Russian feeling in the matter, and he does not trouble to point out that the nihilist refugee found a safe asylum in England after leaving France.

In regard to German diplomacy he recognizes that it has been neither incoherent nor trifling. In connection with the Algeciras conference he admirably sums up his attitude toward Germany and the Franco-German question, as follows: "One may recall, at this distance from the past, Bismarck's saying that 'indignation is not a political state of mind.' And as one understands better, one is less inclined to grow angry. The prodigious display of effort, activity, and intrigue which distinguished German policy during those three months could not be explained—and would be blamable and ridiculous—if Morocco had been

the only stake that was being played for, if the only questions had been those of deciding about a few gendarmes and meagre custom duties. Let it rather be supposed that this effort and activity and intrigue were meant to build up, on the threshold of the twentieth century, the most extraordinary structure of political power that had ever been raised since the time of Napoleon I; to save Bismarck's work from the assault of age; to secure Germany in the domination of Europe that had belonged to her from 1871 to 1891—and even to 1902; to oppose these new combinations by an alliance that had gloriously won its laurels in a series of trials, and with it to overcome them. Then one may admit that the sometime exaggerated ardor of German policy was not unjustifiable. "Its only crime in the eyes of history will be that of having been useless."

As the author says, the plan of the book resulted from the subject itself. France and the Russian Alliance, France and the English "Entente," France and the Mediterranean Understandings, France and the Triple Alliance, Conflict of the Alliances, The New Asiatic and European Understandings, these chapters follow one another in logical order. The chapter on France and the United States, although of little importance to the main argument of the book, was necessary in view of the immediate circumstances that produced it.

In conclusion, M. Tardieu gives us an interesting exposition of the present attitude of France in relation to Germany.

M. Tardieu is singularly well qualified by training and opportunity to write such a book as this. It is a valuable addition to the history of European diplomacy of our time, and withal it is so readable a book that it should appeal, not only to students, but to all who are interested in world affairs.

GEORGE FREDERICK ANDREWS.

The Russian Army and the Japanese War. By GENERAL KUROPATKIN. Translated by Captain A. B. Lindsay and edited by Major E. D. Swinton, D.S.O., R.E. With maps and illustrations. In two volumes. (New York. E. P. Dutton and Company. 1909. Pp. xxi, 309; vii, 348.)

As we learn from the translator's preface and author's introduction, these extremely interesting and important volumes are a translation of the fourth (together with the conclusion of the third) volume of a much